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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/996,518	11/29/2001	Katsuhiko Doi	450100-03654	3535
20999	7590	09/02/2004	EXAMINER	
FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG 745 FIFTH AVENUE- 10TH FL. NEW YORK, NY 10151			LUG, EMMANUEL S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1722	
DATE MAILED: 09/02/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/996,518

Applicant(s)

DOI ET AL.

Examiner

Emmanuel S. Luk

Art Unit

1722

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 6/29/04.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 5 and 6 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Newly submitted claim 1-6 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: The claims have been restricted in a previous office action sent on 8/13/2003 indicating that a provisional election, via telephonic restriction, was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group 1, claims 1-4 between conversation with Will Frommer and Examiner Fontaine on October 29, 2002.

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 5 and 6 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

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1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

4. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Osada et al (5603879) in view of Lebensfeld (5453000).

Osada teaches the claimed apparatus having a cavity (20) formed by dies (7, 8), the vacuum apparatus (45) is disposed in proximity to the cavity (Fig. 1) and communicates with a circumferential portion of the cavity, the vacuum tank (45) also having a valve (47, 48) for controlling the open and close of passage between the vacuum channel and the exhaustion channel (39).

Osada fails to claim an apparatus having a vacuum tank in the die apparatus and the tank being at least a larger than a total volume capacity of the cavity plus said exhaustion channel.

However, Osada does claim spaces (38) located in the die apparatus that is in connection to the die and the vacuum connection (Fig. 2). Additionally, Lebensfeld teaches a molding apparatus wherein the mold (80) is in close proximity to the vacuum tank (61) (Fig. 14-18). The pump is located inside the housing (12) of the apparatus along with the mold (80).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Osada with the tank located inside the apparatus in close proximity to the cavity as taught by Lebensfeld because it allows for portability of the entire apparatus in a single housing.

In regards to the product, Osada and Lebensfeld both teach a unitary molded product being produced. Both references are capable of creating a disc-shaped product it is merely a change in shape of the molding surface. The shape of the molding surface in creating the shaped product is a design choice of the user.

In regards to the size of the vacuum tank, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to change the size of the tank for the desired vacuum effect on the cavity it is merely relative size. Lebensfeld also teaches the use of the tank for producing a partial vacuum in the cavity. Thus, a larger tank size for achieving a complete vacuum of the cavity.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 4/30/2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The applicants further argue the combination of the prior art, stating that the prior art are not combinable. However, Lebensfeld, while a 'child's toy' is still a molding apparatus and thus one skilled in the art recognizes the molding technology utilized in that apparatus and be able to combine it with Osada. In regards to the tank size, the applicants state that tank size has no bearing on the effectiveness of the vacuum drawn. Thus, the vacuum tank size is variable depending on the desire of the inventor and is merely a change in size.


Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Emmanuel S. Luk whose telephone number is (571) 272-1134. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 7 to 4 and alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ben Utech can be reached on (571) 272-1137. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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